

# etc magazine

City College of San Francisco | Spring 2018

NEW  
DRONE  
COURSE  
COMING  
TO CITY  
COLLEGE

## TRIGGERED BY LOVE

*Local Artist Tsungwei Moo Turns Pain Into Art*

## RACE TO CITY HALL

*Special Mayoral Election  
Coverage from a  
City College Perspective*



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**ON THE COVER:** Photo by Eric Nomburg/Etc Magazine. Tsungwei Moo presses clay into gun piece molds. Moo picked the parts from a gun buyback program to create artwork for the Robby Poblete Foundation.

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**ABOUT ETC MAGAZINE:** Etc Magazine is an award-winning student publication. It is written, edited, photographed, illustrated, designed, produced and distributed by students enrolled in the Journalism program at City College of San Francisco.

The magazine is devoted to fair and objective reporting. We cover the important issues facing the college and its students, faculty, staff, administration and surrounding community. Any opinions expressed in the publication represent the views of the students who authored them. Etc does not purport to represent the views of the school's administration. The magazine is published twice a year—once in the spring and again in the fall.

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

To me, this Spring semester has been one of hope. I have seen the resilience of our school, our neighbors and our nation. City College overcame the accreditation crisis, community leaders and members came together to fight for what they believe in and everyday people have been working tirelessly to make the world a better place.

The stories in this issue reflect the change and the new beginnings of spring.

My piece, **How to Fly a Drone Without Killing People**, highlights City College's comeback with exciting new courses in drone technology. The secret's out: Amazon isn't the only one experimenting with drones.

Victor Tence's **Pioneering the Waters** tells the story of a fisherman revolutionizing the fishing industry to save his livelihood and bring back to San Francisco the opportunity to buy fish straight off the boat. Tence braved seasickness and experienced the difficult life of a fisherman to report on this story.

For **The Race to City Hall**, Kelly Conner researched and interviewed voters, activists and even candidates themselves, to inform the City College community who may have their best interests at heart.

Eric Nomburg's **Triggered By Love** illustrates a woman's incredible resiliency after her boyfriend's murder and the art she created not only to heal, but to raise awareness about gun violence to her community.

In **Ocean Ave Crossing**, Quip Johnson brings to light the risks of jaywalking to and from City College's Ocean Campus, at one of San Francisco's many dangerous intersections.

Laurie Maemura dives deep into the world of chefs and drugs in **Away From the Kitchen: the Realities of Chef Life**, following two successful chefs working on opposite sides of the city to discover how the work-life balance of chefs tends to be intertwined with substance abuse.

I'm grateful to all the writers, photographers and designers who worked hard to meet deadlines, chase sources and report the stories needing to be told. And a special thanks to our incredible adviser, Jessica Lifland, whose guidance and expertise helped us produce an award-winning publication.

*Sarah Lapidus*

Sarah Lapidus, Editor-in-Chief





# THE RACE to City Hall

Special mayoral  
election coverage from a  
City College perspective

By Kelly Conner

*Above: Voters hold signs in support of various mayoral candidates outside the March 19 mayoral forum held at the Castro Theatre. (Kelly Conner/Etc Magazine)*

Four mayoral candidates, mic'd and suited-up, file onto the stage of the historic Castro Theatre for the March 19 mayoral forum. As the moderator begins to introduce them, a skirmish erupts in the crowd. The moderator is distracted, and his voice trails off.

"I am a candidate too! I have things to offer!" cries a figure in the dark, surrounded by security guards.

Outlier candidate and community activist Amy Farah Weiss squirms out of her captor's grip and runs onto the stage,

daring anyone to remove her. The moderator relents, exasperated, as Farah Weiss joins the other candidates. The crowd roars — some applaud, others boo. Entertainment is all around.

Then, as if diversionary tactics have been coordinated, another cry rips through the room via a megaphone. Heads turn toward a small group of African-American young adults unrolling a 12-foot wide drop cloth with a message that reads, "London Breed Doesn't Care About Black People," a bitterly sardonic statement since Breed is the only African-American candidate.





From left to right, Mayoral candidates Angela Alioto, London Breed, Jane Kim and Mark Leno greet the attendees of the Feb. 28 mayoral forum at the United Irish Cultural Center of San Francisco's Sunset district. A special election will be held on June 5. (Kelly Conner/Etc Magazine)

More boos. More cheers. The protesters are escorted away.

Welcome to the San Francisco mayoral election of 2018. Be ready to vote by June 5.

The top contenders are London Breed, Jane Kim and Mark Leno, with Angela Alioto trailing a distant fourth in the polls. All four are Democrats with moderate to progressive records. In terms of their politics, voters may find more similarities than differences; making an informed choice is not simple.

That's why it's important to dig a little deeper. But first, some math.

According to fact sheets on City College's website, an average of 64,000 San Francisco residents have taken a class at City College each year since 1999, about 7 percent of the city's total population.

Although it's hard to pinpoint how many registered voters are in that 7 percent, it is still a substantial slice of the electoral pie. Add that to the approximate 900 residents who serve as faculty, and it can be calculated that about 1 in 10 San Francisco voters work at or attend City College.

It could be enough to decide an election.

But what are the candidates' track records regarding their support of City College?

District 6 Supervisor Jane Kim was a key player in Free City coming to fruition. She worked with members of City College's faculty union, American Federation of Teachers, Local 2121 (AFT 2121), and sponsored Proposition W, which funded the program via a parcel tax.

Free education for all, right?

Maybe.

Taxes collected under Proposition W are put into a general fund with no legal requirement to be used for City College. The legislation was intentionally written so fewer votes would be required for it to pass.

Currently, Free City is a two-year pilot: a trial period with no guarantee of continuation after Spring 2019.

Therefore, if Free City isn't successful, it could go away after the pilot period, and the funds could potentially be used for other purposes.

However, Kim is proud of her accomplishment. She often mentions it during the forum debates.

Would she be the most invested candidate to ensure the program sticks around?

In April, city officials reimbursed \$2.7 million of the \$4 million originally requested for the Free City program.

According to a recent article in the Examiner, City College allegedly did not comply with the terms of the program agreement, so the remaining funds were withheld.

One of the key platforms of Kim's progressive campaign is fighting income inequality. Last year she tried to pass a tax on companies paying their CEOs a higher percentage than their employees. Now, she wants to make childcare and education attainable for residents and has placed another tax measure, Proposition C, on ballot to fund it. Also priorities on Kim's list are cleaning up San Francisco's streets, providing affordable housing and improving transportation.

At the mayoral forums, Kim is factual and lays out her plans point by point. However, at a forum in Noe Valley last January, a relaxed, off-script Kim took to the floor. When hecklers interrupted an attendee's question about police violence, Kim artfully settled everyone down and asked for mutual respect. "Working with high



school students prepares you for politics,” she said with a laugh, referring to her time as a community organizer in Chinatown.

The other progressive candidate is Mark Leno. Some of his best-known accomplishments include passing the nation’s first marriage equality law, creating protections for transgender Californians and raising the statewide minimum wage from \$10 to \$15 per hour.

Leno has dedicated 18 years to public service — four years as San Francisco supervisor and 14 years in the California State Legislature. He is an openly gay politician who lost his life partner, Douglas Jackson, to the AIDS epidemic that ravaged San Francisco in the 1990s. Leno is well-known for his convivial nature in the often cut-throat world of politics; he can light up a room with his smile and seems genuinely at ease in the spotlight.

During the accreditation crisis, City College suffered a devastating plunge in enrollment. Leno, state senator at the time, passed a financial bailout that gave City College time to stabilize and recover.

And he didn’t stop there. Leno also succeeded in removing the growth cap, the limit on funding for new enrollment. Once enrollment began to increase, City College would continue to receive additional funding from the state rather than having funds capped at 1 or 2 percent growth per year. In other words, City College



Mayoral candidate Jane Kim talks with members of the City College faculty union, AFT 2121, at their headquarters. Kim worked with union representatives to make the Free City program a reality. (Steven Rhodes/special to Etc Magazine)

would gain money faster to help offset the costs of accommodating more students.

Alan D’Souza, chair of AFT 2121’s political education committee, expressed gratitude for Leno’s accomplishment.

“In conjunction with Free City, we are growing beyond the usual 1 to 2 percent. City College is the only college that received that. And we were the only college that received stability funding,” D’Souza said.

Leno touted his success at the mayoral forum at the United Irish Cultural Center in San Francisco on Feb. 28.

“We were able to access \$70 million to save City College when it was in the depths of its accreditation crisis,” Leno said.

Despite trailing behind in the polls, Alioto should not be discounted. She has a long history with San Francisco politics and is worthy of consideration.

A longtime civil rights attorney hailing from Pacific Heights, Alioto sat on the board of supervisors for eight years, from 1988 to 1997, serving for two as board president. If elected, she would be the second Mayor Alioto; her father, Joseph, served from 1968 to 1976.

At the forums, she’s funny and speaks informally, but she also means business; she is a San Francisco old-timer who tells it like it is.

Alioto is laser-focused on fixing the homelessness crisis and cleaning up the streets. She has done it before. When Gavin Newsom was mayor, he tasked Alioto with ending homelessness in 10 years. “The 10-year plan absolutely worked. They defunded it and took buildings out of it in 2012,” she said.



Mayoral candidate Mark Leno, center, talks to a group of supporters preparing to canvas the Bernal Heights neighborhood on his behalf. (Steven Rhodes/special to Etc Magazine)

At least once per debate, she promises to fire a department head who hasn't done their job, blaming them for exacerbating the city's problem with dirt and grime.

When asked what she would do as mayor to keep the Free City program operating in light of the invoicing complications and non-earmarked Proposition W funds, Alioto said, "I would sign the check. End of conversation."

She added, "City College should be free. Period. But then the funds arrive, and [Kim] can't get it out because she's getting opposition. The idea of not being able to get it out of the city when it was intended for City College ... it seems to me they're breaking some laws."



*Mayoral candidate London Breed introduces herself to the crowd attending a forum held at the United Irish Cultural Center. (Kelly Conner/Etc Magazine)*

Mayoral-hopeful London Breed has a different relationship with San Francisco than the other candidates. She was raised by her grandmother in the Plaza East public housing project of San Francisco's Western Addition. She experienced firsthand the problems that can

flourish and lead to crime in an economically disparate community.

As mayor, she has vowed to tackle crime by increasing police presence on the streets. Other issues she intends

## "We're lucky to live in a city where our college is very supported."

— Brigitte Davila

to tackle include housing affordability and resolving homelessness.

In terms of Breed's history with City College, she endorsed Proposition W and attended and supported a one-day faculty strike during contract negotiations in April 2016.

Over time, Breed saw that the African-American population in San Francisco was dwindling, mainly due to gentrification and a lack of affordable housing.

When her grandmother's building was demolished due to disrepair in the 1990s, only two families, including her own, "won" the lottery for new subsidized housing nearby. She told the San Francisco Chronicle in 2015 that she didn't understand how this happened.

Once she was elected supervisor for District 5, which included both her childhood and her current home, in Lower-Haight, she fought for and passed neighborhood preference legislation. This gives long-time neighborhood residents priority for housing lotteries, a lifeline for renters in historically black neighborhoods.

Breed, as President of the Board of Supervisors, was next in line to take over as acting mayor upon Mayor Ed Lee's surprising death in December 2017. Then, a few weeks later, the majority of supervisors voted to replace Breed with District 2 supervisor Mark Farrell.

Many have questioned the vote; Aaron Peskin, supervisor of District 3, claims the

vote was intended to send a clear message: San Francisco politics cannot be influenced by outside interests, in reference to Ron Conway, the billionaire tech investor and political influencer.

In January, Hillary Ronen, supervisor of District 9, appeared on KQED's show, *Forum*, and accused Conway of threatening to ruin her and other sitting supervisors' careers if they did not support Breed's run for mayor.

Although Conway is a vocal supporter of Breed, he has denied the allegations of pressuring others to support her.

Breed said she found the question "offensive" when the moderator at the Castro Mayoral Forum asked if Conway was using his wealth to influence her politics.

So, where do City College faculty stand with all of this?

AFT 2121 met with the candidates to see how their priorities lined up with those of City College.

"Ultimately, we decided to endorse in unranked order: Mark Leno and Jane Kim," said D'Souza.

However, the Board of Trustees at City College remains neutral; as a public institution, they do not endorse political candidates.

Board President Brigitte Davila said, "The board takes no position on this. I'm sure that we can work with any of the candidates."

On a personal level, Davila is at ease with the choices on the June ballot.

"We're lucky to live in a city where our college is very supported," Davila said. "Mark Leno and Jane Kim have really had the opportunity to stand up for the school."

San Francisco is undoubtedly a very different city today than it was when the late Mayor Lee took office in 2011. Whoever wins the seat in June could remain there for the next decade. At the end of the day, the candidates mostly agree on the issues that need to be fixed; they just have different ways of going about them.









Candidate Angela Alioto discusses her stance on homelessness at a mayoral forum. (Kelly Conner/Etc Magazine)



Richard Kim, wearing a T-shirt that says "I'm Jane Kim's Dad," supports his daughter's run for mayor at a campaign event at the Folsom Street Foundry in April. (Steven Rhodes/special to Etc Magazine)

## WHO STANDS WITH ME?

THE CANDIDATES	 <b>ANGELA ALIOTO</b>	 <b>LONDON BREED</b>	 <b>JANE KIM</b>	 <b>MARK LENO</b>
<b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN</b>	Affordable housing for teachers, families and workers. Ensure development and new transit lines go hand-in-hand.	Build more rent-restricted and market-rate housing. Build on underutilized sites. Use the commercial property tax increase to pay for affordable housing.	Protect renters and rent-controlled apartments. Expand subsidies for families and teachers. Down payment assistance for workers. Streamline development.	Purchase "at-risk" units to keep them affordable. Draft housing bond to stop displacement and increase affordable housing.
<b>SOLUTION TO TRAFFIC CONGESTION</b>	Traffic-free piazza downtown. Fire Muni Director Ed Reiskin.	Consider a cap on ride-hail companies. Make Muni more reliable. Extend subway to Fisherman's Wharf.	Tolls on high-traffic streets. Per-rider fees on ride-hail companies. Add seats to light rails. Add ferries.	Subway along Geary Boulevard. Consider a city vehicle license fee.
<b>HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY</b>	Focus on permanent housing and less on shelters. People who are newly homeless get immediate help.	End all tent encampments within one year. Build modular homes and expand conservatorship for people with severe disabilities.	Improve shelter access and medical care. Create behavioral health court system rather than sentencing people with mental illnesses to jail.	Move 1,000 people into vacant SROs. Create a mental health justice center.
<b>STREET CRIME AND AUTO THEFT</b>	Install security cameras. Strengthen penalties to include more jail time and fines.	Public education on keeping valuables out of cars. Assign neighborhood prosecutors to each district.	More security cameras and lights. Judicial task force specific to street crime so cases aren't dismissed as lower priority.	Equip police with fingerprinting kits to collect evidence. Increase penalties.

Infographic photos from left to right: Angela Alioto, London Breed and Jane Kim (Kelly Conner/Etc Magazine) Mark Leno (Steven Rhodes/special to Etc Magazine)



Artist and City College alumna Tsungwei Moo works on her mixed media piece for the Art of Peace project sponsored by the Robby Poblete Foundation.

# TRIGGERED BY LOVE

Local artist Tsungwei Moo turns pain into art

Story & Photos by Eric Nomburg

**I**t was the morning after the August 2017 total solar eclipse when Tsungwei Moo's phone lit up with a voice message from Jamaica. It was her ex-boyfriend's mother.

She couldn't decipher Beverly Lawson's thick Jamaican accent, so Moo texted her. After some back-and-forth they connected the following morning. This time the message was clear: Her ex-boyfriend, Ricardo "Dean" Distin, was dead.

Once she was able to get the story from Distin's sister, Moo learned that he was murdered violently in his home on Aug. 21. He was ambushed and tortured.

"They ruined his face, and they shot his chest," Moo said.





Instead, she went to Ocean Beach that day and laid down in the sand.

Moo thinks Distin was killed by someone he knew.

The two met in 2006 while Moo was vacationing in Jamaica.

She was in Negril enjoying a Christmas celebration with some friends who had gathered at Distin's uncle's house.

Later, Distin's father, Granville, invited her to meet his son at his house.

"Dean (asked) me if I like to ski. He said 'Let's ski now.' I was wondering 'how can we ski in Jamaica? Such hot weather.' Then he took out his computer game," Moo said.

Moo described Distin as a hard worker who was close with his family. Through his work, he was able to furnish his modest home with electricity, Internet and a computer.

Moo took another trip to Jamaica in 2012 to visit her friends, including Distin.

This time, the moment she and Distin were alone, they realized that they wanted to be together.

Since Moo was establishing herself as an artist in San Francisco and Distin was in Negril, much of their relationship had to be long-distance.

Originally from Taiwan, Moo moved to San Francisco in 2005 and honed her creative skills at City College.

Her first class at City College was an English as a Second Language (ESL) non-credit class which she enrolled in two years after arriving from Taiwan. Then she focused on art classes, primarily ceramics and painting.

She began showing her work in galleries and applying to competitive exhibitions, which she continues to do today. She also spends her summers teaching soft pastel landscape drawing in Yosemite National Park.

A lack of technology in Negril made it difficult for Moo and Distin's romance. They tried using video chat, but the connection often failed. They talked by phone when they could. She knew that if they were going to make the relationship work, she would have to move to Jamaica, which she couldn't wrap her head around. They decided to break up but continued to keep in touch. She still loved him.

The murderers made off with very little when they robbed Distin's home. They took an outdated computer, some cash and not much else.

Moo was aware of the random but regular violence in Jamaica, yet she was still shocked. "Why was it him?" she asked.

It was already a complicated time for Moo. Her mother was in the hospital in Taiwan, and a large hurricane was on course for Jamaica.

And as if the weather report wasn't enough, Moo's Jamaican friends advised her not to come. They feared she could be attacked if she returned, even at the funeral.

Moo did not go. "I really wanted to see, but I was afraid," she said.



*Tsungwei Moo assembles bullets around candles while working on an art project for the Robby Poblete Foundation. She chose the pieces from guns collected as part of the gun buyback program the foundation organizes.*



Distin was 32 when he died.

Just this past March, Moo learned from Distin's mother and sister that Jamaican police caught six individuals suspected of being associated with the robbery after the discovery of a computer with Distin's blood on it.

There was a court trial, and authorities released five of the suspects. They only detained the one accused of pulling the trigger. He's now in prison.

"Dean's already gone. Even though they caught those murderers, he cannot come back. It's strange to see his death certificate," she said.

Moo responded to Distin's violent death by celebrating his life, expressing her feelings through her art.

Moo's City College painting instructor, Ema Harris-Sintamarian, praises Moo and her artwork. "I always liked her paintings from the moment that I first saw them. It's not hard to realize when someone has determination and everything else," she said.

On a table inside Moo's San Francisco apartment sits a large sculpting wheel. Balanced on it is a white pod that looks like a tattered chrysalis — a cocoon.

In the cocoon of white plaster and fiberglass is a latex mold encasing a clay bust in the likeness of Distin.

With the help of fellow artist Devon Parsons, Moo delicately stabs the edges of the pod with a small wooden dowel. Spinning it, they switch to a handheld pair of nibbling pliers to bite off bits of plaster. Finally, they bring out a hammer and screwdriver. They pound into the pod and chip off pieces to reveal bumpy blue latex in the likeness of Distin.

With a knife they cut and peel off the eerie blue skin, revealing a clay bust underneath.

Moo wants to place the bust on his grave in Negril. Worried about theft, she will use the latex mold to create a new bust made of a sturdier material like cement or bronze.

It's like a birth. The eyes are revealed first. Then the entire face becomes visible. An earthy, musky odor wafts







*Moo and Devon Parsons work on removing the casing to expose a latex mold of the bust Moo sculpted of her murdered ex-boyfriend, Ricardo "Dean" Distin. She plans to take the mold to Jamaica and create a duplicate bust for Distin's grave.*





*Moo works on another sculpture of her ex-boyfriend, Distin.*

up from the ceramic material that had been trapped inside. “It smells; open the window,” Moo said.

On the wall in Moo’s living room hangs a 24-inch-by-36-inch acrylic painting, depicting Distin casually standing on a patch of red, pink and white trampled flowers. He’s wearing blue shorts and sandals, smoking a cigarette and holding onto a donkey by a strap. It’s part of a series she did of him.

Recently she submitted a portfolio application that included images of Distin to the Muni Art Project, a project that exhibits the work of selected artists on 100 Muni Art buses throughout the city. It is a partnership between the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) and San Francisco Beautiful, a local non-profit that “advocates for civic beauty, neighborhood character and accessible public art for all in San Francisco,” according to their website.

Moo was one of five artists selected, and in January 2018, eight pieces of her artwork went up in 20 Muni buses. Each

**“I always liked her paintings from the moment that I first saw them. It’s not hard to realize when someone has determination and everything else.”**

**— Ema Harris-Sintamarian**

bus has 18 panels, eight of which displayed a series of Moo’s artwork, and one which showed her bio. The work would remain up through April 2018.

Moo assumed most people riding the bus were too weary and distracted to look up at the art panels. She felt similarly while on a recent bus ride until

she looked up. “Oh my god! It’s my bus! It’s good. It’s colorful,” she said.

Other riders notice too. “I like them. Much better than looking at ads,” said Jan Drees, 37, a construction worker riding the 22-bus line.

“Something nice to look at when you’re riding the bus,” said Jerome Singletary, retired, 73, also on the same line.

Moo went back to Jamaica recently for a four-day trip. She gave Distin’s mother a Muni print featuring Distin. She is still working on the bust.

On that same trip, Moo returned to Distin’s now boarded-up house. As she plodded up the hill, she was stopped in her tracks when a dog caught the heel side of her sandal with its paw. She reached down to pet the mutt, but he ran away. Later, neighbors told her that the dog, Lasco, had belonged to Distin.

When she arrived at the house, she laid down on the floor. Raised in a culture that believes in ghosts, she expected to sense





Moo presses gun parts into clay molds for her project for the Robby Poblete Foundation. She plans to use the molds to create gun-shaped paper pieces.

his presence by feeling cold or getting goose bumps, but instead she felt nothing.

After Moo's success with the Muni Art Project, a friend told her about the Robby Poblete Foundation, an organization founded by Pati Poblete, whose son, Robby, was shot and killed in Vallejo in 2014.

The organization provides job skills training for at-risk youth, young adults and ex-offenders, including welding and metal fabrication, as tribute to Poblete's son who was a welder.

They also offer a gun buyback program.

Selected artists are invited to sift through the dismantled gun parts to reincarnate the pieces into artwork as part of a project titled The Art of Peace.

Moo applied and was selected to participate.

The collective art project is to be unveiled in Vallejo on May 11 at a Friday Art Walk. The hope is to find a place where students can view it and have a conversation about gun violence, gun safety and the impact of guns on society.

Back in Moo's art studio, she constructs her piece for the Art of Peace project on the floor. She flutters about her piece like a butterfly.

Using a ceramic mold, Moo forms pieces of the guns out of paper. She grabs paint tubes from the pile, seemingly at random, and applies vivid colors onto the textured paper gun parts. She attaches them to a canvas on which she has painted an image of a father and child.

Her concept is to create a home for them out of the paper guns. She says the guns, no longer metal and

**"We all deserve a safe home, a place where our families and community can grow and prosper. But so many of us are forced to live in violent neighborhoods."**

**— Tsungwei Moo**

destructive, are transformed to protect the father and child inside the house.

"We all deserve a safe home, a place where our families and community can grow and prosper. But so many of us are forced to live in violent neighborhoods," Moo said.

Harris-Sintamarian views Moo's participation in the Art of Peace project as that of not only an artist but that of an activist as well, saying "It's a wonderful way of turning the tragedy into something alive."



Left: Moo's art hangs on art panels inside a Muni Art bus. Right: She sifts through paints while working on her piece for the Art of Peace project for the Robby Poblete Foundation.

# PIONEERING THE WATERS

The first environmentally friendly trawl fishing boat sells directly to the public

Story & Photos by Victor Tence

Nothing on the ocean is easy. Stoves need frames bolted to their surface so pots and pans don't slide off as they sway with the heaving ship. Wooden slats run the length of the refrigerator shelves, keeping a six-man-crew's three-day supply of groceries tight

and secure. Anything that swings on a hinge is hooked and latched into place.

The 76-foot trawler, christened the Pioneer, is scheduled to depart from Pier 47 at midnight. Crew members gather in the dark, toss over their gear and hoist themselves onto the deck as rain begins to pour.

Captain Giuseppe "Joe" Pennisi decides to push back the departure three hours for more-favorable wind conditions. He and the crew use the extra time to rest up for the job ahead.

Once the Pioneer disembarks, Pennisi will stay at the helm for the 10-hour journey to the fishing grounds and will remain awake around the clock to direct crewmen as they use winches and heavy machinery to lay out a 400-foot-wide swath of net.

On these three-day excursions he will be lucky to get three hours of sleep; he has occasionally gone without.

The life of a trawl fisherman is not only physically demanding but also incredibly dangerous. The job is characterized by long hours, strenuous labor, heavy equipment and unpredictable seas. With such unique occupational conditions, it is no surprise the Bureau of Labor Statistics ranks it as one of the most hazardous jobs in the country, with a fatality rate 50 times higher than the national average.

Pennisi has 20 some years of experience running a squid boat in the Bering Sea and has lost a brother and uncle to the ocean. He knows the risks better than most, and for the past 18 years he has also been



Above: The Pioneer, returns to Pier 47 three hours late after a cable on the deck snapped due to rough weather.

Right: Dillon Krizon ensures the net rolls back into the winch properly when he raises the catch onto the deck of the boat.









*On the deck of the Pioneer, Scott Cadonau uses a flat plastic shovel to process thousands of pounds of rockfish. After they release the catch, the crew must work quickly to get it to refrigeration in order to preserve the quality and shelf-life of the fish.*

facing a very different danger that threatens his livelihood: heavy-handed regulatory practices by the federal government.

The fishing industry on the West Coast began January 2000 by declaring a federal economic disaster. Two decades prior had seen a steady haul of about 74,000 tons of fish, but by 1999, boats were bringing in 36,000 tons, and projections for the following year topped out at only 27,000 tons.

“Too many fishermen were chasing too few fish,” said Dean Lauritzen, a professor of marine biology at City College.

In response to the sharp decline, the federal government quickly instituted a boat and permit buyout program, prohibited fishing in prime grounds and

began to restrict the number of days boats could spend fishing at sea.

As a result, the remaining permitted boats fished more aggressively in the space and time they were allowed, leading to even more waste. The nets and trawl techniques they used were indiscriminate, picking up all sorts of plant and animals. It was the norm to throw back any unwanted or over-fished species even if they had already died from the trawling process.

Dr. Matthew Schweitzer, a professor in the biological science department at City College, is familiar with the waste of the fishing industry. “For every pound of fish you want, they will get several pounds of bycatch,” he said.

Pennisi estimates that at times conventional trawl boats were dumping as much as 60 percent of their haul as waste.

During an interview with the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), he recalled once climbing to the highest point of his boat to see a carpet of dead fish stretching the length of a football field.

“It was like taking this industry made of glass and dropping it on concrete,” Pennisi said.

Between the boat buyout program and the heavy regulation on fishermen, Pennisi watched his community dwindle. Twenty years ago the number of California bottom-fish trawl boats sat roughly between 45 to 50. Today, Pennisi





holds the last federally-granted bottom-fishing permit in San Francisco.

However, he is now receiving a great deal of attention, not for being the last of his kind, but rather for pioneering something new.

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“Haul back! Haul back!” yells a crewman amidst the flashing lights and high-pitched chirps of the emergency warning system, which the captain uses as an effective wake-up call. The crew emerge, awakening from various stages of sleep. It has only been a couple of hours since they were mending and laying out the net. Within seconds, they wrestle themselves into thick, padded boots and full-body rubber aprons.

The men take their positions behind thick steel cables and large heavy duty winches. One man quietly sets up a digital scale at the corner of the deck. He bends down to latch a waterproof camera to the railing with a carabiner and adjusts his clipboard as quickly as his rubber gloves will allow. Then he waits and watches.

He is Joel Kraski, and he is not a fisherman. He is a marine biologist.

In 2011, following the devastation of the fishing industry, the Pacific Fishery Management Council implemented a catch-share program. Biologists would now measure a fishery and determine the ‘total allowable catch’ possible to maintain a healthy population and

establish quotas. Boats would be allowed to choose when and where to fish, as long as they stayed within their quotas.

More importantly, bycatch, or unwanted species, would be measured and counted against the fisherman’s share for the first time, thus removing the incentive to fish aggressively. To monitor the fishing boats, a marine biologist was placed on every vessel operating on the West Coast to account for all the bycatch thrown back into the sea.

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Kraski watches the crew maneuver the net, now an engorged writhing mass, onto the ship. Once it has been lifted from the water, two men quickly fasten a second crane





*Captain Giuseppe "Joe" Pennisi and his crew wrestle a 15,000 pound net of fish onto the deck of the Pioneer.*







to the catch, lifting the entire bulk off the deck. The trapped fish hang suspended in a teardrop before specialized knots at the end of the net are undone, disgorging the fish in a cascade of glistening red scales.

The rain of fish spills to all corners of the boat, and the crew begin sorting. They must work quickly; every hour the fish spend outside of refrigeration will cost them a day of shelf life. Using hooks, shovels and their hands, the crew fill bins by fish type. They sort through tiger rockfish, chilipepper rockfish, bocaccio, petrale sole, spotted ratfish, spiny dogfish sharks and the occasional Dungeness crab.

Undersized fish of no value, along with banned species, are given to Kraski, who records and occasionally photographs the bycatch. It is a surprisingly small sum. The total recorded waste for this estimated 5,000-pound haul sat at a meager 30 pounds. Kraski explains that conventional trawl boats would typically bring in 1,000 to 2,000 pounds of waste for catches of a similar size.

“I’m highly impressed; this is just about as clean as I’ve ever seen it,” Kraski said.

Unlike most fishermen, Pennisi celebrates fish escaping his special nets.

Juvenile fish in particular are problematic, they are often too small to have any value on the market and are easily killed by the heavy trawl nets.

“As a kid, watching small fish die on the deck always bothered me,” Pennisi said.

By the year 2007, Pennisi knew protecting his livelihood meant things would have to change. He began at ground zero, or as Pennisi puts it, “the net at the bottom of the seafloor.”

## “As a kid, watching small fish die on the deck always bothered me.”

— Joe Pennisi

“So many fishing practices destroy the bottom ecosystem with their trawls, and when you fish over and over again you set yourself up with little chance of recovery,” Lauritzen said.

First, Pennisi wanted to understand how fish swim through nets, so he created a device with a camera

that followed alongside the fish.

Then, partnering with the EDF, Pennisi sat in his kitchen and sketched, designed and sewed his vision of a better trawl net.

He engineered a net capable of releasing juvenile fish and sorting by species, all the while leaving the bottom of the ocean intact.

His new nets were considerably lighter, down to 400 pounds from 7,000 pounds. They glide like a kite just above the seafloor, rolling on large plastic wheels to prevent the mouth from digging into the seabed.

Multiple chambers with luminescent panels and glow rope redirected any unwanted fish back out of the net, a design driven by observations from Pennisi’s underwater camera.

In 2014, the University of Monterey decided to test his claims with a side-by-side comparison of his gear versus the standard industry trawl gear.

With his newly designed nets, not only had Pennisi reduced his bycatch to a fraction of the original, but he also saved fuel with the reduced weight and minimized bottom contact by 95 percent.

Excited by his progress, the EDF sent Pennisi to speak to over 70 fishermen, scientists, net manufacturers and fishery managers at a workshop in Newport, Oregon.

“I really want to make sure the results of this gear, which are extremely promising, get translated and disseminated throughout the fleet,” said Shems Jud, Pacific regional manager of the EDF.

However, Pennisi wasn’t content to only revolutionize his nets. While he was designing and improving gear, he also sought a better way to conduct business.

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Pennisi never considered the fish markets to be friends of fishermen.

Markets dictated which species of fish were bought and what price would be paid per pound. Anything else the nets caught had no value, creating a direct incentive for commercial fishermen to throw back any fish that weren’t requested.



The Pioneer will often bring up skate, halibut, chilipepper rockfish, petrale sole and the occasional Dungeness crab.





*Pennisi attaches a second crane to help haul the bulk of their catch out of the water and onto the deck of the Pioneer.*

Pennisi knew that direct sales to the public would not only cut down his waste but improve the bottom line.

He set his sights on netting a first receiver's site license for his rockfish, which would allow him to forgo the fish market and sell directly to the public — no simple task for a small independent fisherman.

It took five years to find a suitable berth for the Pioneer to dock and off-load the catch as specified by the license. Pennisi had to modify his boat's cranes and design a specialized table to both receive his fish and act as a scale to record the weight.

"I had to build everything very meticulously and to serve more than one purpose, so we were compact and versatile," Pennisi said.

Once everything was in place, Pennisi applied for his license, and a team of inspectors came to evaluate his home-made equipment and storage sites.

Pennisi got the green light, and on Oct. 31, 2017, opened his boat for direct sales for the first time.

On its first weekend, Pioneer Seafood sold 230 pounds of rockfish. Today, the trawl fishing boat draws a crowd and often sells more than 2,000 pounds of fish per weekend.

People line up and wait up to 30 minutes with big plastic buckets and coolers to buy Pennisi's fish. They're willing to wait for the quality and the price.

"The fish is fresh; it's local and cheap," said Aldin Bolante, a San Francisco local buying fish for his extended family.

Despite the fact that Pennisi is selling his fish \$2 to \$3 per pound cheaper than his competitors, he is still earning more than the 40 cents per pound markets would pay.

Since receiving his license, Pennisi has expanded his seafood menu from four to 17 different species of bottom-dwelling fish.

Lauritzen says this is a good thing.

"If everyone targets the same species, well, it is essentially a death sentence for that species. You need to spread the pain out," he said.

People now meander up the small road to Pier 43, looking a little bit lost as they skeptically inquire about the fishermen selling fish.

It's hard to blame them.

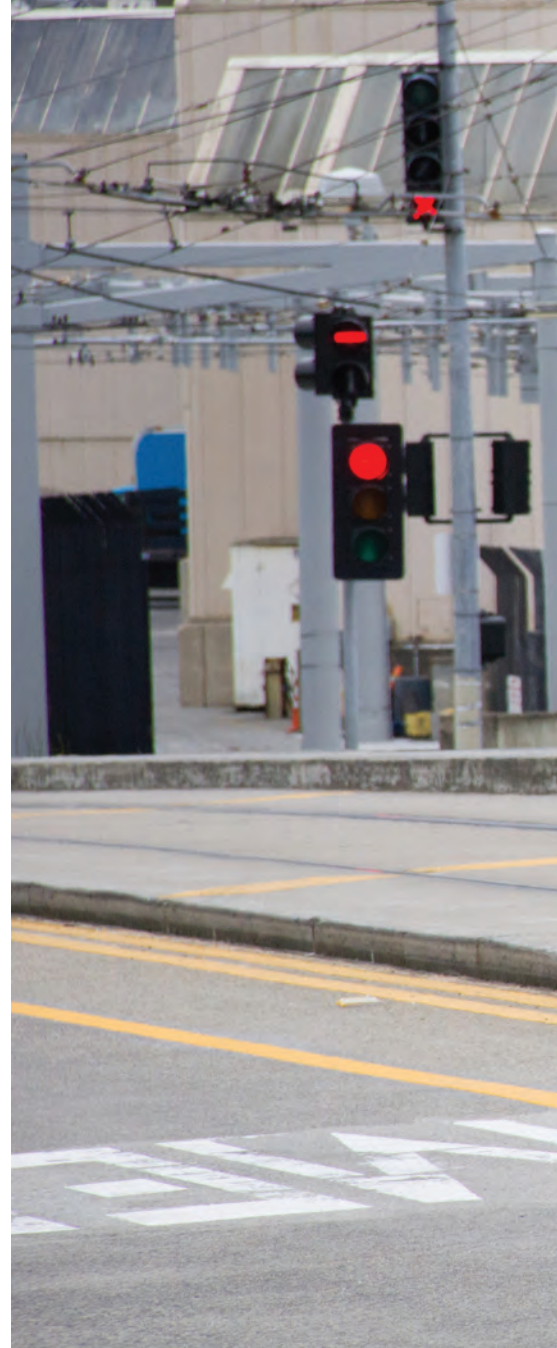
Fisherman's Wharf has become the quint-essential tourist-trap of San Francisco. For years, the only fishermen people saw were the cartoon wooden cutouts in yellow raincoats inviting customers to eat chowder out of sourdough bread bowls.

To see the Pioneer berthed next to Scoma's restaurant and down the street from the San Francisco Dungeon, it is easy to mistake the boat as just another gimmick — another naval relic like the USS Pampanito, for visitors to ogle and photograph.

In many ways, Pennisi's 20-year old trawl ship is the last of her kind. However, to ensure the future of his business and to protect the health of the Pacific, he has transformed her into something far more exciting: a true pioneer.

# OCEAN AVE CROSSING

Story by Quip Johnson  
Photos by Victor Tence



## Is your life worth 48 seconds?

**T**hat's the average time saved by jaywalking across Ocean Avenue rather than using the crosswalks parallel to Howth Street.

It's 1:36 p.m., and City College student Brigitte Cervantes, a nursing major, leaves her algebra class in Batmale Hall to head home.

Instead of walking up Ocean Avenue to the crosswalk, Cervantes does what about 1 in 5 people do and jaywalks

across both the four-lane street and the Muni track that divides it.

It takes her 21 seconds to cross. Three cars pass her.

Cervantes is aware of the potential dangers pedestrians face. She was once hit while crossing right in front of the Wellness Center.

"I was actually not even jaywalking. I was just walking across and the car — you

know how it's tilted up there — just kinda rolled forward and hit me, so I can only imagine how much worse it would be if you were jaywalking," Cervantes said. "I was fine ... but I know my uncle and my neighbor have been hit ... just in this month, so I know it's a real problem."

In the case of a car versus a pedestrian traffic collision, the pedestrian is more likely to be killed, and a jaywalker is at a higher risk of injury than the average crosser.

Besides the cross-traffic, jaywalkers face additional danger from cars exiting Interstate Highway 280, some of which





*Despite efforts to dissuade pedestrians from jaywalking, it is still a common practice on Ocean Avenue near the Balboa Park BART Station and across from City College.*

reach speeds of 60 mph. According to Walk San Francisco (WalkSF), San Francisco's pedestrian advocacy organization, a person hit at 20 mph has a 90 percent chance of survival, while a person hit at 40 mph has only a 15 percent chance.

"I just don't see the need of (jaywalking)," said Chris Matt Mayren, a City College student who almost always uses the crosswalks. "I've often contemplated as a driver, 'If I just sped up, would these [jaywalkers] even notice?'"

WalkSF's website also says at least three pedestrians are hit by a vehicle every day

in San Francisco, and 36 percent of all collisions are the pedestrian's fault. According to Vision Zero, the organization behind the city's road safety policy, about 30 people die and over 200 are seriously injured while walking in San Francisco each year.

Cervantes has also worked as a nursing intern for the Veterans Affairs Medical Center near Ocean Beach for two-and-a-half years. When asked what she would expect to see from a car versus pedestrian collision, she responded, "Worst case scenario, obviously, you die. But you could also have ... loss of limb or head trauma and brain injury."

Vision Zero's Pedestrian Collision Map shows seven pedestrians were seriously injured and three were killed along Ocean Avenue between City College and the Balboa Park BART station from 2005 to 2011.

As of March 2018, four pedestrians have already been killed in traffic fatalities, notably including Gus Vardakastanis of Gus's Market and Noriega Produce.

One way San Francisco plans to combat this is via implementation of Vision Zero's road safety policy. The organization behind it, which has a goal of





A jaywalker crosses Ocean Avenue near Howth Street under the backdrop of the Excelsior District.

eliminating traffic-related deaths by 2024, carries out continual studies on the number and frequency of pedestrian deaths along high-risk corridors.

Vision Zero defines high-risk corridors as streets with a high ratio of injuries to miles of road.

Previously, the gender, age and injury severity for each person involved in a collision were available on the Vision Zero online interactive map. However, the map has not been updated to reflect the latest data.

As of June 2017, the San Francisco Department of Public Health has been working with the office of Compliance and Policy Affairs to find the best way to share collision information publicly without violating privacy laws.

As of 2011, Ocean Avenue's collision statistic was 64 injuries per mile, hence why it is listed as one of San Francisco's potentially dangerous roads. With the city's population up about 8 percent

since 2011 and over 20,000 more cars on the road, according to the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Reports, this statistic is likely higher today.

"Both the San Francisco Police Department and SF Community College District

**"Jaywalking's just so convenient. I don't even think being afraid you'll get hit will stop people. It's not going to stop me."**

**— Brigitte Cervantes**

Police are aware of increased traffic during school hours," Sergeant Michael Andraychak of Ingleside Police said in an email. "Pedestrians should cross only at corners or marked crosswalks and

should obey posted signs and signals. Even when one has a green light, or 'walk' light, pedestrians should still look all ways before stepping into the roadway."

But Cervantes isn't convinced these suggestions will dissuade jaywalkers.

"I think we're all thinking, 'Oh, I'm smarter, and I look more. I'm not going to get hit like those other people,'" Cervantes said. "Jaywalking's just so convenient. I don't even think being afraid you'll get hit will stop people. It's not going to stop me."



A pedestrian signal flashes red on the City College side of the Ocean Avenue and Howth Street intersection in front of the Wellness Center.





# HOW TO FLY A DRONE WITHOUT KILLING PEOPLE

New course coming to  
City College

By Sarah Lapidus



Top: Students in Donald Laird's drone flying class at Santa Rosa Junior College practice flying on the school's football field. (Kelly Conner/Etc Magazine). Above: Laird, chair of computer studies at Santa Rosa Junior College, explains flying techniques to his class. (Kelly Conner/Etc. Magazine)

**I**t's a sunny yet windy Saturday afternoon, and what sounds like a swarm of angry mosquitoes buzzes just beyond the entrance to the Santa Rosa Junior College football fields. But it isn't mosquitoes; it's a fledgling flock of drones rising and falling, pitching and yawing and occasionally even crashing.

Drones, also known as unmanned aircraft systems (UASs), are part of a growing and rapidly-changing industry. Schools like Santa Rosa, and now City College, are trying to keep up.

The weekly drone class at Santa Rosa takes place partially in a classroom and partially outside. It is at the mercy of the weather.

Despite their impressive technology, recreational drones are still unable to cope with rain or strong wind.

Drones can't handle rain because "their motors are exposed," said Donald Laird, the computer science department chair who started Santa Rosa's drone studies program a year ago.

The long-haired, bearded instructor with rainbow shoes speaks about drones the way a child speaks about a favorite toy.

"I fly anything I can get my hands on," Laird said.

He also creates extra propellers and





*Pixelated Pillsbury; Potter Valley, California 2017 is part of a series of images that photo department instructor Steven Raskin made with the use of a drone. (courtesy of Steven Raskin)*

propeller guards for his students' drones with his department's 3-D printer.

In class, Laird's students share flight time in groups of two or three; they give each other advice on how to complete the flying exercises.

One of Laird's students, Rosa Albanese, 30, said drone flying is about depth perception.

For her, the hardest part about flying is the drone's fragility. She's afraid she will crash and break it.

She stares at the screen of a smartphone clipped into a controller with two joysticks, one on either side. Everything the drone is seeing, she can view on her screen.

"I get stuck in the screen and then lose it," Albanese said, regarding the drone





disappearing from her line-of-sight.

It looks like the class is playing a video game.

“Gentle, you’re doing too big of moves on the stick,” said student Andrew Eljumaily, 20, giving advice to a classmate on how to properly maneuver the drone.

“Try not to break the propeller,” said one classmate.

“You’re a little high,” said another.

“Look at the bird and then the screen,” Laird said.

They are guiding a drone through a square goal, about 5 feet by 5 feet and made from PVC piping, to learn to account for the wind.

Laird instructs both students and teachers how to fly drones. Recently, several City College faculty members who were interested in creating a drone studies curriculum took part in Laird’s workshop. City College photography instructor Steven Raskin was among those who participated.

In Spring 2019, City College will join the three Bay Area community colleges already offering drone flying programs. The course, titled Beginning Drone Piloting and Imaging, will be a joint program between the journalism, broadcasting, cinema and photography departments.

It will teach students “how to fly drones without killing people,” said Raskin, who is writing the curriculum for the beginners’ course.

As Raskin’s comment suggests, the two-credit course will educate students about how to safely and legally fly drones and use the camera to take pictures and videos.

Teaching the laws and requirements governing drone flying might prove challenging with the Federal Aviation Administration’s growing and changing list of regulations.

However, they are important for drone pilots to know.

“There are lots of places that are no-fly zones,” Raskin said.

For example, drones cannot fly over 400 feet, within five miles from an airport

or over a national park or stadium.

With the San Francisco International Airport to the south, national parks to the north and crowds of people in the center, the entire city of San Francisco seems to be a no-fly zone.

Where will the students learn to fly their drones?

Raskin has been meeting with the Physical Education Department to discuss sharing their soccer fields. So far, they have been supportive and are willing to share their resources.

“We are fortunate that the north side of Ocean Campus is just outside of a no-fly zone,” Raskin said.

Although the use of drones dates back to World War I, the frequency of their use has skyrocketed in the last few years.

The City College administration knows “this is a new area where there are jobs and where people need to be trained. It’s not a learn-it-on-your-own proposition, especially when it comes to certification,” Raskin said.

The recent advancements in technology make drones easier to fly and cheaper to buy for the average consumer.

Photographers like Raskin often use mini-sized consumer drones for taking pictures from hard-to-reach places and angles.

“Flying in order to get a camera someplace I couldn’t otherwise get it, that is intriguing,” Raskin said.

As drone technology develops so do its real-world applications. Entire industries are realizing how helpful and cost-effective drones can be for their bottom line.

Laird says they are tools that can be used on the job.

Farmers use drones to spray, plant and monitor crops; delivery companies use them to deliver products to customers. They are used by factories to inspect industrial equipment and by police to search for lost children. A logistics startup, Zipline, even uses them to deliver blood to remote places in Rwanda and Tanzania.



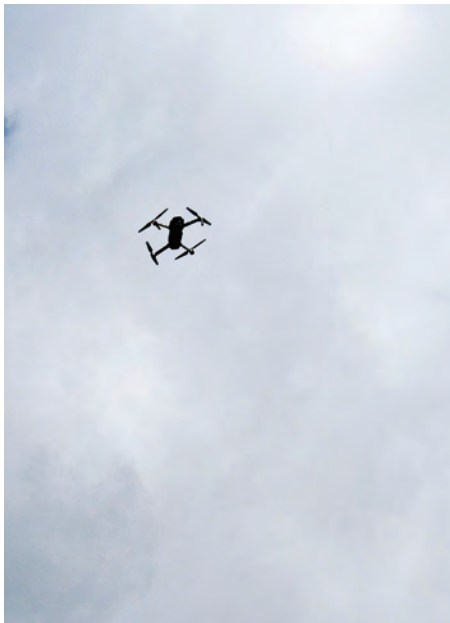






*Mountain Illusion;  
Bonneville Salt Flats, Utah 2017  
part of a series of images that photo  
department instructor made with  
the use of a drone.  
(courtesy of Steven Raskin)*





Students in Laird's drone class learn to fly with a Maverick Pro drone. (Kelly Conner/Etc Magazine)



Laird works with students attending his drone class during a flight practice session on the Santa Rosa Junior College football field. (Kelly Conner/Etc. Magazine)

Drones are often used for recreational purposes too. The difference between amateur and professional drones is determined by weight and intended use, according to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

If the drone or UAS weighs less than 0.55 pounds, it is considered to be a small unmanned aircraft system (sUAS). Although these are the drones typically used by hobbyists, they also have many practical and professional applications too.

Students at City College won't be using large drones like the ones used by the military; they will be flying the consumer-sized drones.

Raskin says this drone class will just be the start.

He aims to launch a second drone class that prepares students for the certification exam, which would allow them to fly the small drones for professional use.

It is legal to fly an sUAS without a license, however, to use one beyond recreational use, a person must get an sUAS pilot's license from the FAA, called Part 107 of the pilot certification exam.

Recently, San Francisco Chronicle photographer Santiago Mejia, a City College alum, used a drone to create aerial

photographs for a before-and-after comparison of the areas damaged in the Santa Rosa fires that raged last fall. This is considered professional use, and he needed his license to do the project or he would have potentially faced steep fines.

Another of Laird's students, Angelica Tercero, 52, likes flying drones because it's "a bit of tech and creativity."

**"We are fortunate that the north side of Ocean Campus is just outside of a no-fly zone."**

**— Steven Raskin**

It also makes her job in media production technology easier.

In the past, she would stand on a tall bucket lift with a camera around her neck to film.

"I'm scared of heights," Tercero said, though now she can use drones to capture her aerial footage.

Once City College students and faculty learn the basics of drone flying, they

will be able to apply those skills to different areas of study such as photography, broadcasting, art and more.

As of Feb. 1, the research company Gartner estimated that 285,000 drones were sold for commercial use in the U.S., but only 73,157 people have an active remote flying license.

This means less than half of all commercial drone pilots are abiding by FAA laws.

Breaking drone flying laws can cost perpetrators thousands of dollars in fines and can even result in jail time.

At one point during Laird's class he yells "Drop!" and on cue, his well-taught students immediately lower their drones to the ground. Moments later a helicopter flies overhead.

"We are legally obligated to give right of way to a manned aircraft," Laird said.

If they see a drone in the sky, helicopter and airplane pilots will try to quickly land their aircrafts to avoid a collision.

This happened during the Santa Rosa fires as they burned 182,000 acres of land and 5,700 buildings across Sonoma and Napa Valley last fall, according to Cal Fire. It was one of the most deadly fires in California's history.

Firefighting planes preparing water



drops or carrying fire retardant could not fly with drones in the air, so the planes had to land until the drones were grounded, delaying efforts to slow the fast-moving blaze. Reportedly, at least one drone pilot was arrested.

It's this "irresponsible side" of drone flying that Raskin wants to stop with City College's drone studies program.

He hopes the new course will inform future hobbyists and professionals of the proper, legal way to fly, all while having fun.

The rules themselves are still being defined and are constantly changing. Add that to the growing range of drone uses and continuous development of new drone technology, and it's hard to stay up to date.

City College's new drone class will hopefully simplify rules and educate a new generation of drone pilots. Stay on the lookout for this course Spring 2019.

Who knows how students will be able to apply it to their current studies; the sky's the limit.



*Rosa Albanese, a student in Laird's class, views the drone's camera display through her smartphone screen which sits in the controller and communicates with the drone via an app. (Kelly Conner/Etc Magazine)*



*Michael Rosenhahn, a former Navy helicopter pilot and current student in Laird's drone class, now enjoys flying by proxy using drones. (Kelly Conner/Etc Magazine)*





The kitchen staff at Outerlands, a popular restaurant in the Outer Sunset, prepare dishes for dinner service using organic and locally sourced ingredients. (Victor Tence/Etc Magazine)

# AWAY FROM THE KITCHEN: *THE REALITIES OF CHEF LIFE*





Stress in the culinary industry tied to alcohol and drug use

**By Laurie Maemura**

**A**fter a chaotic kitchen shift, there's nothing quite like calming the adrenaline with a few cold beers in the comfort of a dive bar down the street.

Although the night starts out innocently enough, just blowing off steam with foodservice friends, a few drinks lead to a few more, and suddenly it becomes wee-hour debauchery.



All too familiar with this ritual is Nels Rutchik, 26, who works as a line cook at Outerlands Restaurant tucked in the Sunset District. He has wanted to be in the restaurant business since elementary school.

"I have a collection of my writing from second grade. In one of the papers, I talked about how I wanted three Italian restaurants and two Mexican restaurants," Rutchik said.

He graduated from South Seattle Culinary School and found a job as a line cook at Maggie Bluffs Restaurant in Seattle, Washington. It was just before his 21st birthday.

Right before Rutchik embarked on his career, a chef and friend

of San Francisco and landed a job as an executive chef at Sparrow Bar and Kitchen, a modern American restaurant in the Haight-Ashbury District.

Rutchik learned quickly that a different environment exists beyond the smile of the hostess and the clinking of glasses. Past the swinging kitchen doors is a high-intensity workplace that makes for busy nights, long hours and competitive roles.

"I was doing 90 hours a week. I would get up for work at 5:30 a.m. and get home at midnight. On Thursdays, I was doing 17-hour days," Rutchik said.

Despite the stress, one perk of his job was the free booze the bartenders served the staff after hours.

Cane Cocktail Lounge, and often continue drinking until 6 a.m., sometimes even up to the start of their next shift.

Jennifer La, a City College culinary department alumna, also experienced the binge drinking culture during her four years working in the restaurant industry.

"It's a bonding experience. You make friends, go drink, talk about how work sucks. Next day, you have stories, and the bartender gives free drinks," La said.

The drinking scene encompasses workers across the kitchen hierarchy. In particular, higher ranking chefs, like head chefs, are known to party several days in a row, Rutchik said.

These prolonged parties, or benders, often include the use of ecstasy, cocaine and other drugs in addition to alcohol.

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The high rate of drinking within the industry may be attributed to workplace stress on top of the pre-existing social pressures.

Another San Francisco chef, City College culinary department alumna Symone Bennett, 24, works at Firefly Restaurant, a southern comfort food eatery in Noe Valley.

After her first job at a wedding catering business in the East Bay, she landed her first restaurant position as a line cook at the popular high-volume Beach Chalet Brewery and Restaurant.

Working at the Beach Chalet was more stressful than her previous catering job, but Bennett felt her new situation helped her develop "a sense of urgency" when working in a high-volume kitchen.

When she was feeling excessive pressure, Bennett would remind herself that the "stress of working on a line never lasts forever, only in the moment of a rush."

"I would just think to myself that the day will eventually come to an end, and I just have to stay focused to get through it," Bennett said.

When night fell, she bonded with her co-workers over drinks.

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Symone Bennett carries bulk containers of loose and dried red chilies out of the dry ingredients room behind Firefly Restaurant during her morning shift. (Laurie Maemura/Etc Magazine)

of his mother offered him some sage advice about the industry.

"She was the only person who actually gave me a realistic expectation of the stress you're going to go under," Rutchik said.

She also told him, "You never get paid what you deserve."

Like most new chefs, Rutchik wanted to work in a city with a scene where he could access the best ingredients from around the world. He moved to the culinary hotbed and Michelin Star city

It is customary in the culinary culture to celebrate or to commiserate a particularly difficult shift with a drink, commonly referred to as a "shift beer." After work, Rutchik would have a "few more than one" while cleaning after closing.

As his drinking became more regular, drinking with his co-workers after work became a habit. Alcohol was everywhere, making it easy for him to hide the beginning of his dependency.

Rutchik recalls how the group would walk one block to nearby bars, Trax or Gold





*Alcohol and revelrie go hand-in-hand, whether it is celebrating a friend's birthday or toasting the end of a rough shift. (Eric Nornburg/Etc Magazine)*

Both Rutchik and Bennett saw chefs lose their cool on the job. Bennett watched co-workers walk out of their shifts because they could not handle it.

She recalls co-workers leaving for a 15-minute smoke break and never coming back.

"If they decided to come back, they would not have a job," she said.

Once, when Bennett was working an especially busy shift at the Beach Chalet, one of her co-workers simply did not show up at all, without sending a message or even a text, which left the kitchen staff in a bind.

When short-staffed, co-workers have to cover additional duties on top of their own, which slows down the food preparation process and adds tension to the already stressful atmosphere.

"If you slow down, [the head chefs] will be pissed," Bennett said.

Although it is hard to find someone to admit it on the record, both Rutchik and Bennett have observed co-workers drinking before a shift to cope. Others

consume marijuana edibles or use cocaine on their shifts, sometimes even behind bathroom doors during a break.

The foodservice industry has the highest rate of substance use disorders, at 16.9 percent compared to other professions, according to a 2015 study by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

**"I would just think to myself that the day will eventually come to an end, and I just have to stay focused to get through it."**

**— Symone Bennett**

Eric D. Lewis, director of the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Studies Program at City College said this is primarily due to individuals being unable to cope with restaurant demands.

In addition to teaching at City College, Lewis also works outside of school as a counselor. Due to his experience working in the foodservice industry, he

understands how the combination of stress, long hours and low wages can derail the motivation of even the most promising chefs, like Rutchik.

Rutchik's addiction worsened when he began to feel trapped at Sparrow.

"I was depressed. I just had no creative control over my food. I'd come to the owner with a dish, and they wouldn't like it," Rutchik said. "I felt lost for a little bit, and I felt like I was doing the same thing every day, not progressing the way I wanted to."

He observed his co-workers' attempts to be creative, but if they strayed too far, the head chefs' tempers might flare, sometimes to the point of verbal abuse.

The more he felt stifled, the more he drank. He even started drinking excessively outside of work.

Two years ago, Rutchik decided to see a doctor because he was having breathing issues, but it turned out he was having "panic attacks from anxiety related to work." His doctor ran some tests. He had elevated blood pressure and low liver function, symptoms from drinking too much.

"That happened to be the only motivation that I needed to cut back," Rutchik said.

Meanwhile, Bennett has learned how to control her drinking around her





Nels Rutchik chops parsley and herbs to make sloppy Joes during his kitchen prep shift before dinner service begins at Outerlands. (Laurie Maemura/Etc Magazine)

co-workers. She maintains a healthy social life away from the kitchen, despite the allure of the post-shift drinking culture.

She has been able to avoid being dragged into a bender but says so many others in the industry “can’t say no to more than one drink.”

However, avoiding it is not so simple.

Through his counseling work, Lewis has observed that the patterns of addiction and recovery are a repeated cycle of stages which can be skipped interchangeably.

He subscribes to a process of behavioral change known as Prochaska and DiClemente’s Transtheoretical Model which has six stages of recovery.

He suggests most foodservice workers begin at Precontemplation (making excuses), then follow through Contemplation (weighing options) and Preparation (beginning to look for treatment).

Some do not make it to Action (initial sobriety) and fail to reach Maintenance (support), which leads to Termination (relapse).

Chef Instructor Aaron Ogden, graduate of City College’s culinary department, has been involved in the restaurant industry since age 14.

Ogden says the culinary program at City College does not address or teach skills regarding the handling of chef life.

Most junior colleges don’t cover this chapter. It is usually taught in a health or nutrition class in four-year programs, according to Ogden.

**“I started focusing on eating healthier, and I noticed my skills changing. I became more happy with my food.”**

**—Nels Rutchik**

“Two-year programs apparently don’t have the room for such class materials as we try to squeeze in basic culinary, management and operational curriculum in the limited time we have,” Ogden said.

Bennett has learned to manage her stress. Instead of drinking, she spends her time off exploring San Francisco and playing video games with her friends outside the industry.

Her current job at Firefly is still demanding. As sous chef, she chops and stirs vegetables and preps ingredients which the head chefs will plate during dinner hours.

She is also a kitchen manager, overseeing the order and delivery of vegetables, fruits and dried goods to the restaurant. This double workload means she needs to work five and sometimes six days a week clocking in at 6 a.m. and clocking out at 5 p.m.

Rutchik noticed that when he was able to change his attitude towards drinking, his physique and mental clarity shifted too.

“I started focusing on eating healthier, and I noticed my skills changing. I became more happy with my food,” Rutchik said. “I felt less lost.”

His current job at Outerlands still means long hours, but he has a more flexible schedule than when he was at Sparrow. He still faces unpredictable and busy evenings, but his schedule allows for a break between prep and opening to stretch or grab a Slurpee from the nearby 7-Eleven.

On his free days, Rutchik enjoys creating new dishes.

“It gives me freedom to play with traditional dishes in ways that people don’t play with them. The more I have grown into my style, the less I have issues with sobriety,” he said.

Rutchik and Bennett have made serious adjustments to their chef life. They are each striving to maintain a healthier lifestyle.

Rutchik believes more restaurant workers could succeed in making this transition or avoiding substance abuse in the first place if they were to receive more support at work or perhaps more training in stress management while still in culinary school.

Rutchik advises foodservice workers who are struggling with excessive drinking and drug issues to take a vacation and see a therapist.

“I think the industry could do a better job making sure there is better work-life balance,” Rutchik said. “It’s one of the biggest stress factors that cooks face in this industry. But that’s easier said than done.”





# FALL 2018 JOURNALISM CLASSES

Classes start August 20, 2018. To register for courses go to [www.ccsfjournalism.com](http://www.ccsfjournalism.com)  
For more information call (415) 239-3446.

## Jour 19: Contemporary News Media

**76160 001** Lec. M W F 09:10 – 10:00 a.m. MUB 170

3.0 units

Gonzales

Introduction to modern mass communication, with an emphasis on development of news media, analysis of the credibility of the media and its impact on daily life. CSU/UC

## Jour 21: News Writing and Reporting

**76162 001** Lec. M W F 10:10 – 11:00 a.m. MUB 170

3.0 units

Gonzales

**78101 551** Lec. W 06:30 – 09:20 p.m. Mission Campus/Rm. 218

Gonzales

Techniques of newspaper reporting, developing and writing a news story, training in information gathering and interviewing sources.

PREREQ.: ENGL 93 or ENGL 95 or ENGL 88 or ENGL 88A or placement in ENGL 96 or ENGL 88B

## Jour 22: Feature Writing

**72111 551** Lec. T 6:30 – 9:20 p.m. Mission Campus/Rm. 217

3.0 units

Rochmis

Fundamentals in feature writing for magazines and newspapers with special emphasis on profile and interpretive news features. Practical experience in interview and in-depth research techniques. Training in how to write a freelance story for publication.

PREREQ.: ENGL 93 or ENGL 95 or ENGL 88 or ENGL 88A or placement in ENGL 96 or ENGL 88B

## Jour 23: Electronic Copy Editing

**77048 551** Lec. R 6:30 – 9:20 p.m. Mission Campus/Rm. 218

3.0 units

Rochmis

This course is for writers, working editors, and those considering a career in editing or copy editing. Students learn to edit newspapers, magazines and web site articles for accuracy, style and organization. The writer-editor relationship, and ways to keep it healthy, is emphasized throughout the course. ADVISE: JOUR 21. CSU

## Jour 24: Newspaper Laboratory

**76882 001** Lec. M W F 12:10 – 1:00 p.m. BNGL 615

4.0 units

Gonzales

An advanced journalism course that trains prospective print editors on all aspects of operating a publication. Laboratory course focused on the publication of the Guardsman. Provides a practical understanding of the various elements involved in producing a newspaper.

PREREQ: JOUR 21 ADVISE: JOUR 22. CSU

## Jour 26: Fundamentals of Public Relations

**74606 551** Lec. R 6:30 – 9:20 p.m. Mission Campus/Rm. 217

3.0 units

Gonzales

Prepares students to create an effective public relations campaign which includes writing media releases, "pitch" letters, public service announcements, managing media outlets, coordinating mailings and designing leaflets and posters, as well as setting up news conferences.

Special attention given to in-house public relations duties for corporate and non-profit entities.

ADVISE: JOUR 24 and VMD 105. CSU

## Jour 29A: Magazine Editing & Production

**78546 551** L/L M 6:30 – 8:20 p.m. Mission Campus/Rm. 217

3.0 units

Lifland

Students work as part of a staff focusing on writing and photographing feature stories suitable for publication in the campus magazine.

ADVISE: JOUR 21 or JOUR 22 or JOUR 37

## Jour 31: Internship Experience

**72312 001** Exp HOURS ARR BNGL 615

2.0 units

Gonzales

Supervised on-campus or off-campus employment in a branch of journalism or a closely allied field. ADVISE.: JOUR 24, Repeat: Maximum credit: 4 units.

## Jour 35: Internet Journalism

**76939 551** Lec W 6:30 – 9:20 p.m. Mission Campus/Rm. 271

3.0 units

Gonzales

Advanced concepts of news gathering, interviewing and writing. Students will be assigned beats covering neighborhood communities and local government. Extensive research, interviewing, meeting coverage and writing involved. Students will improve and expand their news gathering and writing skills. ADVISE: JOUR 21 CSU

## Jour 37: Intro to Photojournalism

**76939 551** Lec. W 6:30 - 9:20 p.m. Mission Campus/Rm. 217

3.0 units

Lifland

Emphasizes concepts of photojournalism such as news and feature photography. Assignments will involve photographing people and visual storytelling at a level appropriate for publication such as in campus publications. Access to Single Lens Reflex (SLR) digital or film camera required. ADVISE: PHOT 51 or demonstration of equivalent knowledge. CSU



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missing is **YOU.**

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**JOURNALISM 29**

Magazine Editing & Production

Monday 6:30-8:30 Fall & Spring Semesters

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